

Boundary Setting Quick Start Guide

A boundary is a limit you put on your own or someone else's behavior for the purpose of protection. Setting a boundary is always an act of loving self-respect.

Begin here:

1. CLAIRFY YOUR NEED

Identify the problem area in your life where you feel you need to set a boundary. Name the conflict or problem involved.

What specific kind of change do you hope to achieve in setting a boundary?

Who do you need to set this boundary with? Who else might be affected by your boundary?

2. CHOOSE YOUR WORDS

Most people respond better to a boundary that is set with fewer words, especially when the words are clear, accurate, and delivered in a firm yet calm voice.

Begin to formulate the boundary setting message you want to deliver and write it out. Say it out loud a few times.

Are there any words you could eliminate from your message? If so, cross them out and rewrite your message. Be sure to remove all words that sound nagging, blaming, or judgmental.

3. ASK FOR SUPPORT

Some boundaries are more difficult to set than others because of the nature of the setting or the relationship history involved. In some cases, it may even be prudent for you to have a support person with you when you set the boundary.

If, for any reason, you are concerned about your personal safety, think of a way to deliver your boundary setting message other than in person.

It can also be very helpful to talk through your boundary intent and message with someone you trust such as a counselor, life coach, clergy person, mentor, or friend.